



# Black Sea Bass



Advisory Panel Meeting  
June 21, 2023

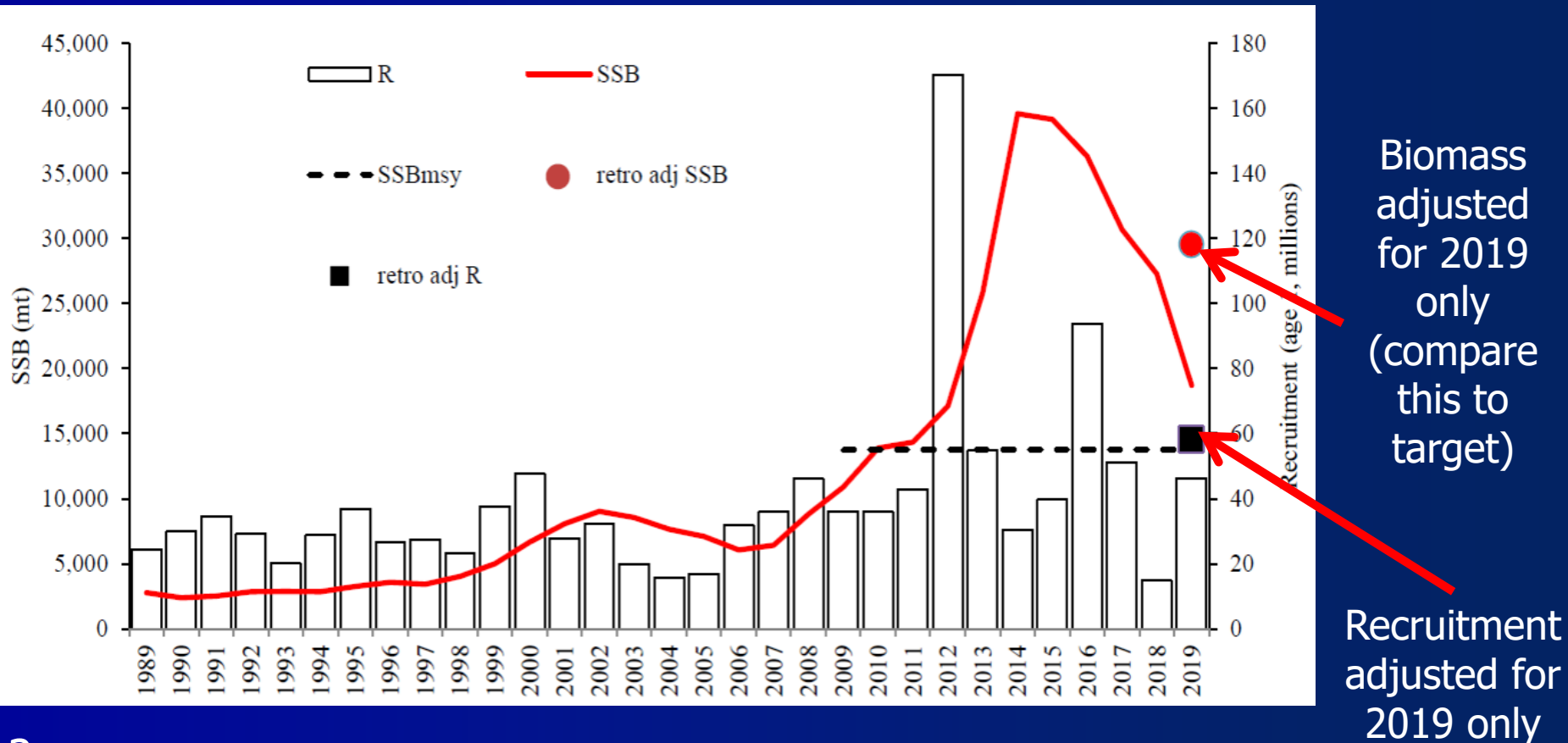
# Stock Status

- 2021 management track assessment
  - Data through 2019
- Data update expected later this month
  - Won't update stock status
  - Fishery catch estimates and survey indices only
- Research track assessment currently in development
  - October 2023 peer review
- Stock status will be updated through a subsequent management track assessment in June 2024

# Stock Status

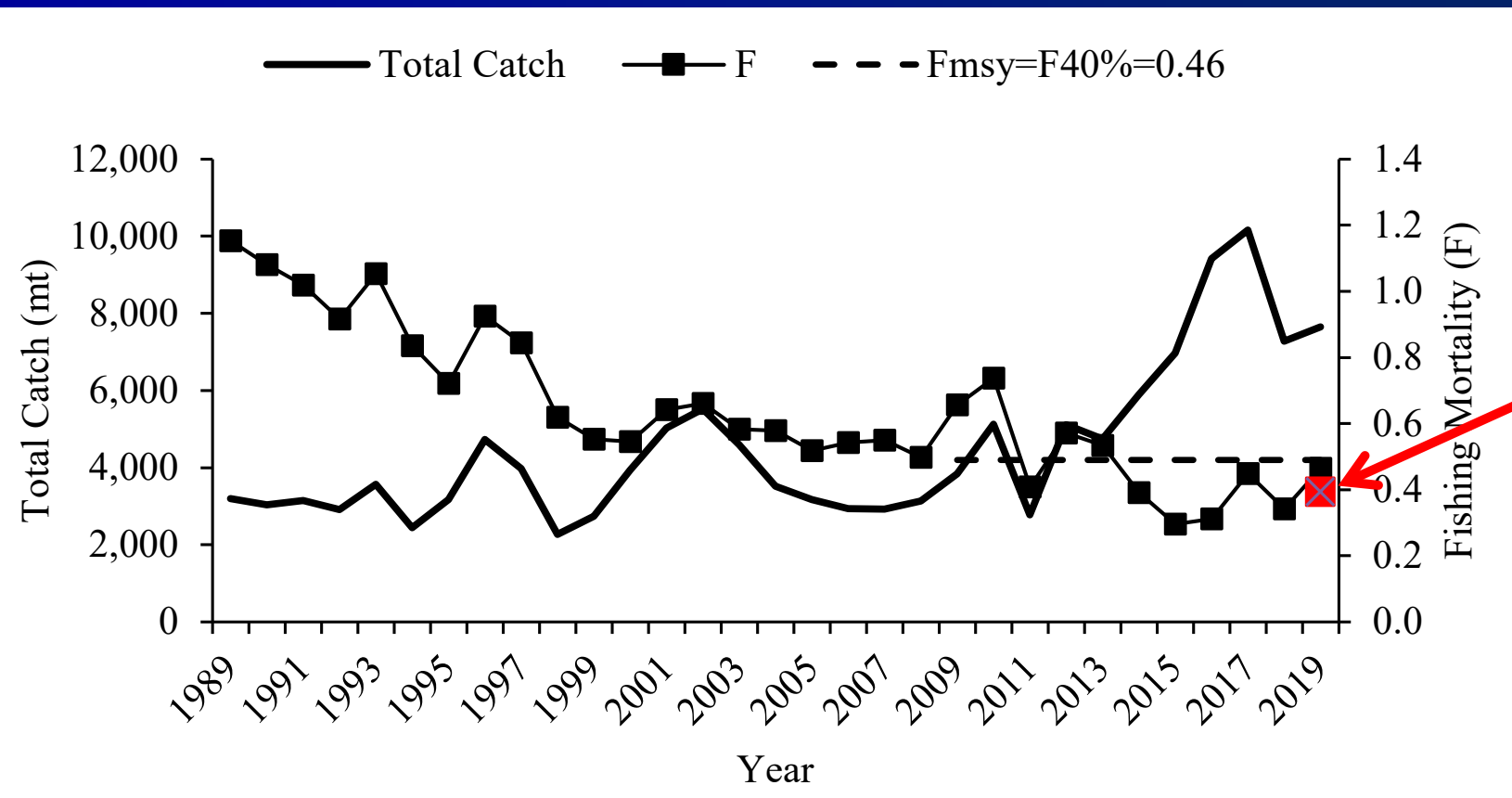
Not overfished.

Biomass about double the target level as of 2019.



# Stock Status

Overfishing not occurring as of 2019.



Fishing mortality adjusted for 2019 only (compare this to threshold)

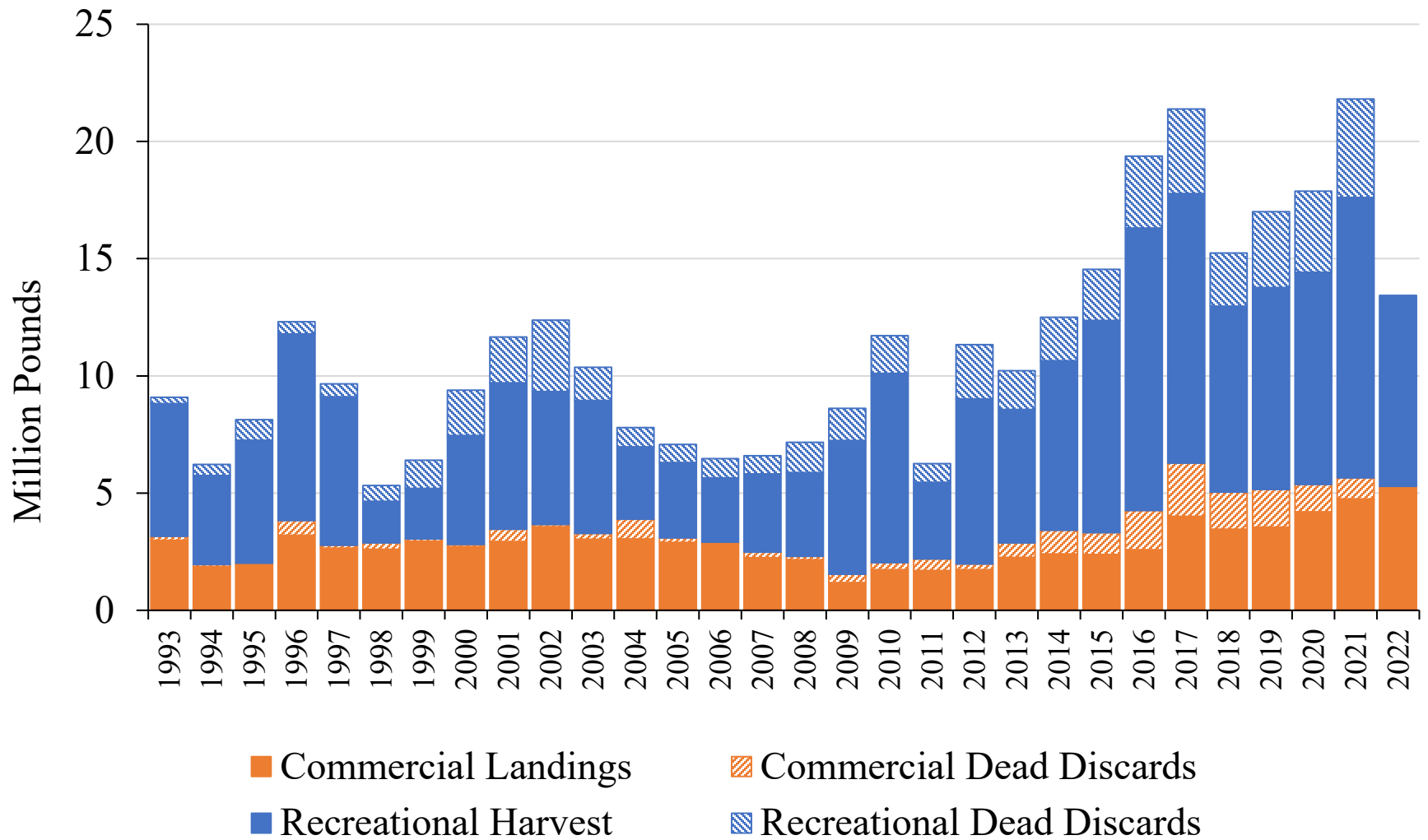
# OFLs and ABCs

Year	Total dead catch	OFL	OFL over/underage	ABC	ABC over/underage
2013	5.99	NA	NA	5.50	+9%
2014	7.92	NA	NA	5.50	+44%
2015	7.92	NA	NA	5.50	+44%
2016	10.66	NA	NA	6.67	+60%
2017	11.70	12.05	-3%	10.47	+12%
2018	9.97	10.29	-3%	8.94	+12%
2019	9.77	10.29	-5%	8.94	+9%
2020	17.88	19.39	-8%	15.07	+19%
2021	21.82	17.68	+23%	17.45	+25%
2022	--	19.56	--	18.86	--
2023	--	17.01	--	16.66	--

Limits/catch values in millions of pounds

Total catch calculated using "old" MRIP data through 2019

# Total Catch



# Commercial Fishery

Year	Com. landings	Com. quota	Quota overage/ underage	Com. dead catch	ACL	ACL overage/ underage
2014	2.40	2.17	+11%	3.41	2.6	+31%
2015	2.38	2.21	+8%	3.31	2.6	+27%
2016	2.59	2.71	-4%	4.26	3.15	+35%
2017	4.01	4.12	-3%	6.27	5.09	+23%
2018	3.46	3.52	-2%	5.05	4.35	+16%
2019	3.55	3.52	+1%	5.81	4.35	+34%
2020	4.20	5.58	-25%	5.37	6.98	-23%
2021	4.75	6.09	-22%	5.65	9.52	-41%
2022	5.30	6.47	-18%	--	10.10	--
2023	--	4.80	--	--	7.50	--

# Federal Commercial Measures

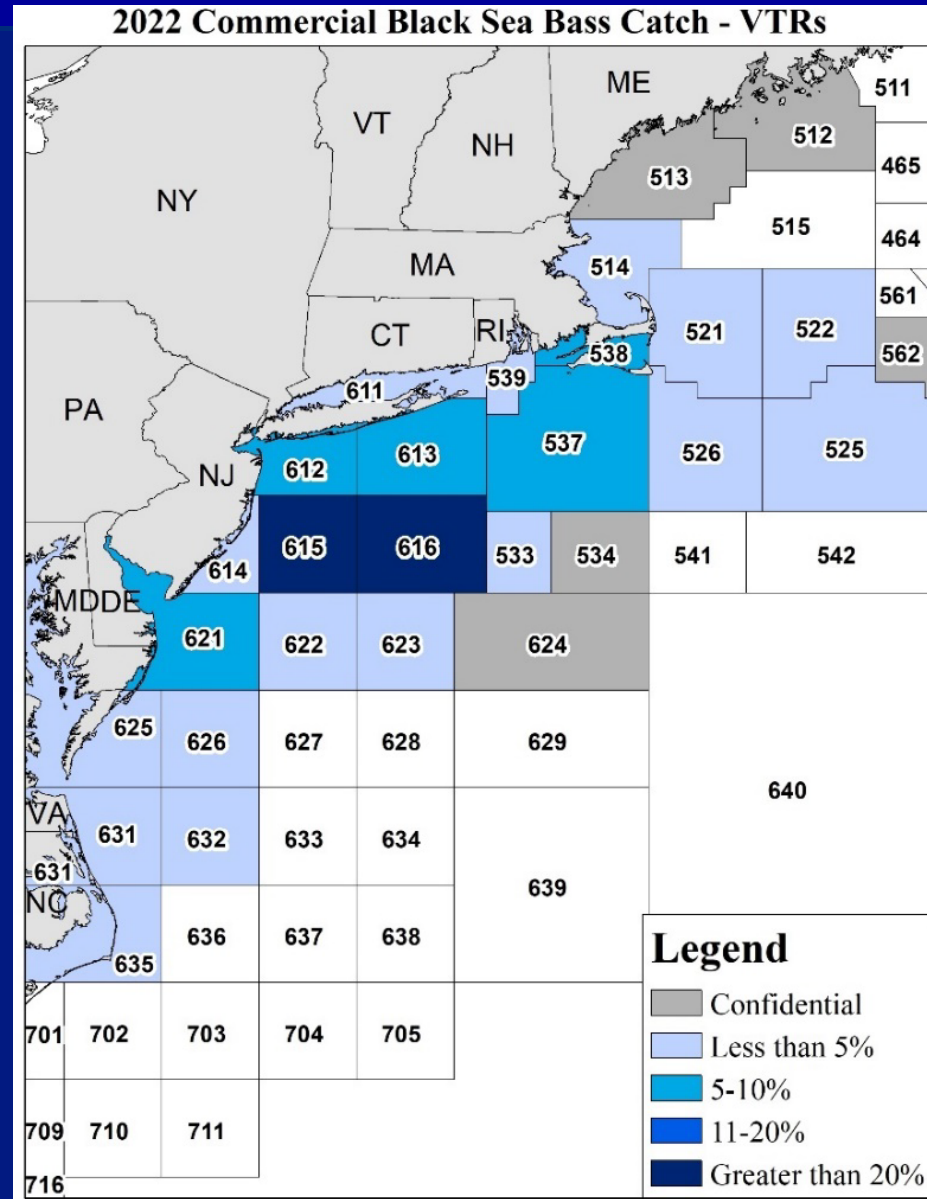
- Unchanged for several years.
- No possession limit (state-specific limits)
- Min. trawl mesh size of 4.5" diamond if retaining more than
  - 500 lb, Jan – Mar
  - 100 lb, Apr – Dec
- Pots/traps
  - 2 escape vents, degradable hinges
  - 1.375" x 5.75" rectangular, 2" x 2" square, 2.5" circular
- Min. size: 11" total length



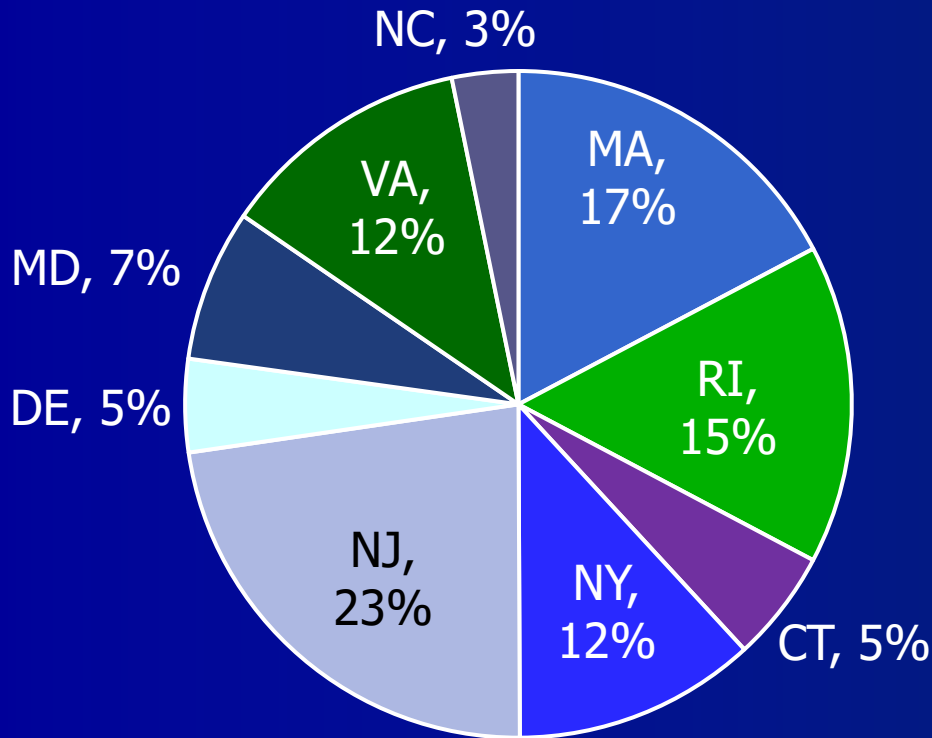
# Com. Catch Locations

- Federal VTR data only.
- Does not account for vessels only permitted to fish in state waters.

Stat Area	% of 2022 Com. BSB Catch	Number of Trips
615	22%	286
616	21%	463
537	9%	1,333
613	8%	1,702
621	6%	293
612	6%	512



# 2022 Com. Landings by State



State	2003-2021 Allocation	2022-2024 Allocation
ME	0.5%	0.40%
NH	0.5%	0.40%
MA	13.0%	15.44%
RI	11.0%	13.06%
CT	1.0%	3.67%
NY	7.0%	9.79%
NJ	20.0%	19.81%
DE	5.0%	4.09%
MD	11.0%	8.73%
VA	20.0%	15.88%
NC	11.0%	8.73%

State	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC
Number of dealers	0	0	36	31	14	50	27	4	7	10	17

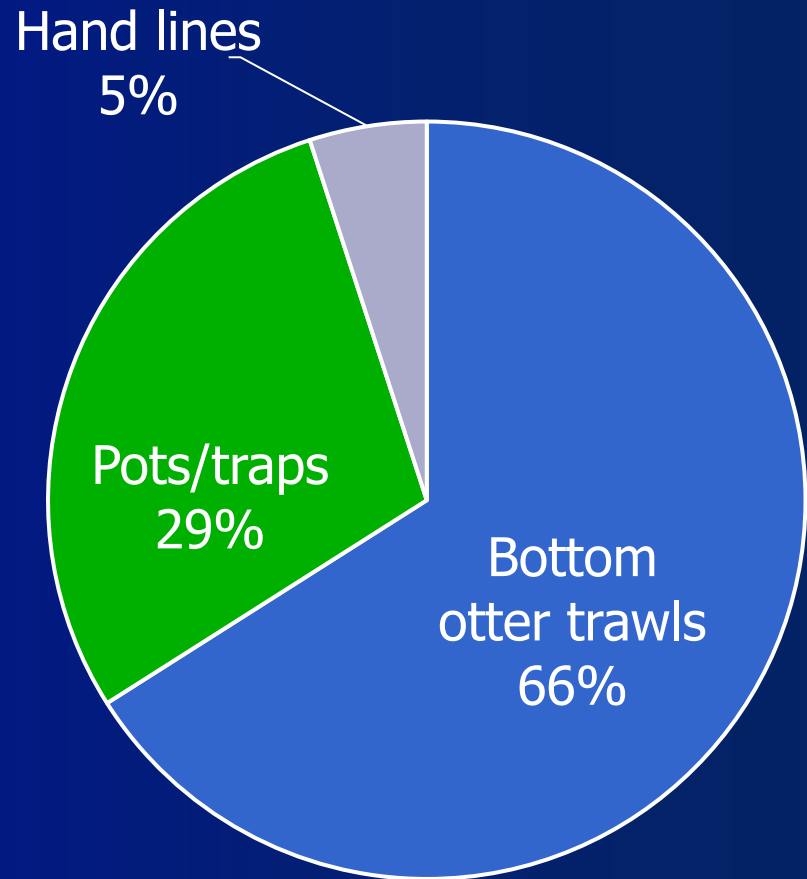
# Top Commercial Ports, 2022

Dealer data (state and federal)

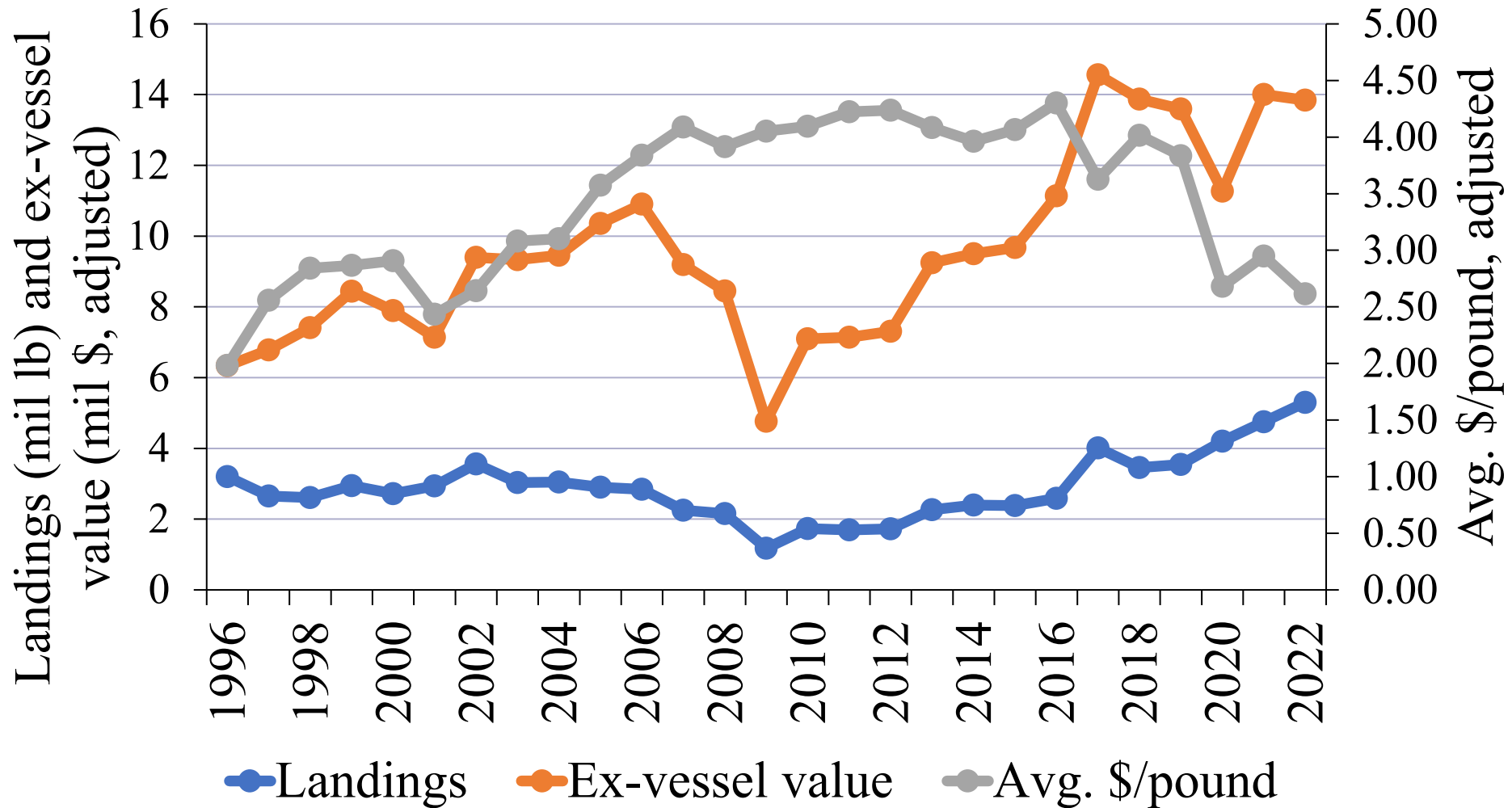
Port name	Pounds of black sea bass landed	% of total commercial black sea bass landed	Number of vessels landing black sea bass
POINT JUDITH, RI	652,377	12%	137
POINT PLEASANT, NJ	640,632	12%	41
OCEAN CITY, MD	386,391	7%	16
MONTAUK, NY	365,483	7%	95
NEW BEDFORD, MA	339,715	6%	63
CAPE MAY, NJ	275,524	5%	26
HAMPTON, VA	202,429	4%	20
SEA ISLE CITY, NJ	175,609	3%	10
NORFOLK, VA	122,687	2%	5
NEWPORT NEWS, VA	114,720	2%	14
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	C	C	C

# 2022 Com. Landings by Gear

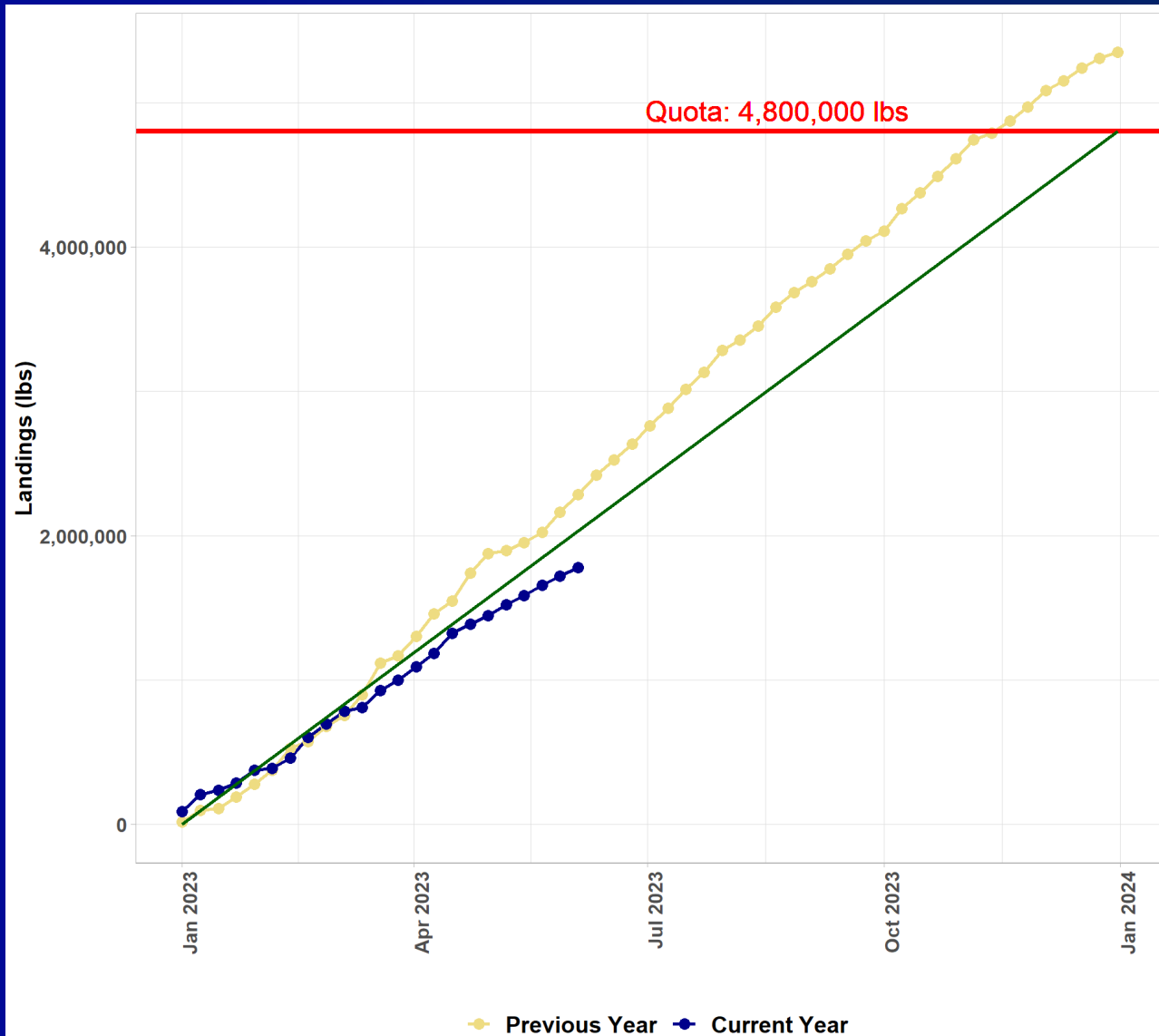
- Federal VTR data only.
- Does not account for vessels only permitted to fish in state waters.
- Some gear types (e.g., hand lines) are more prevalent in state waters than federal waters.



# Com. Ex-Vessel Value & Price



# 2023 Commercial Landings



# Recreational Fishery

Year	Version of MRIP data	Rec. harvest	RHL	RHL over/under	Rec. dead catch	ACL	ACL over/under
2014	OLD MRIP (pre-revision)	3.67	2.26	+62%	4.51	2.9	+56%
2015		3.79	2.33	+63%	4.61	2.9	+59%
2016		5.19	2.82	+84%	6.40	3.52	+82%
2017		4.16	4.29	-3%	5.43	5.38	+1%
2018		3.82	3.66	+4%	4.92	4.59	+7%
2019		3.46	3.66	-5%	3.96	4.59	-14%
2020	NEW MRIP (post-revision)	9.05	5.81	+56%	12.51	8.09	+55%
2021		11.97	6.34	+89%	16.17	7.93	+104%
2022		8.14	6.74	+21%	--	8.76	--
2023		--	6.57	--	--	9.16	--

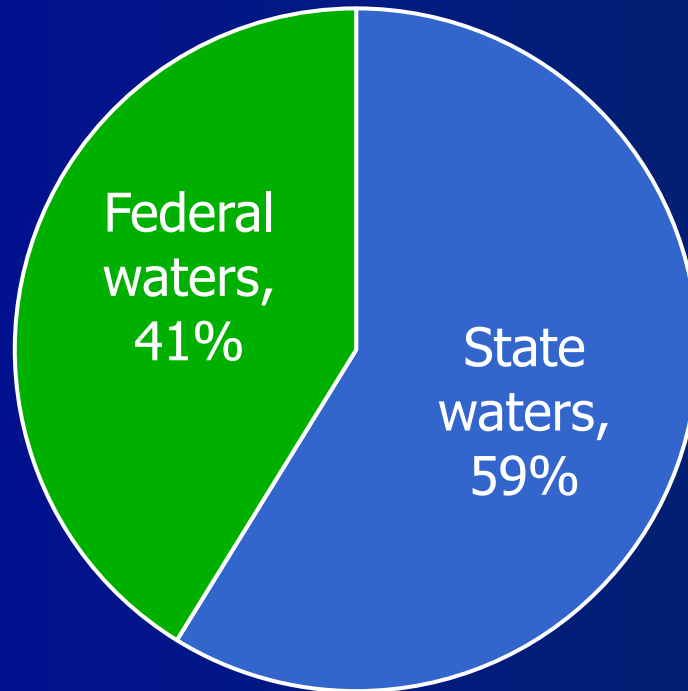
# 2023 State Measures

State	Min. Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
Maine	13"	10 fish	May 19-September 21; October 18-December 31
New Hampshire	16.5"	4 fish	January-December 31
Massachusetts	16.5"	4 fish	May 20-September 7
Rhode Island private & shore	16.5"	2 fish	May 22-August 26
		3 fish	August 27-December 31
Rhode Island for-hire	16"	2 fish	June 18-August 31
		6 fish	September 1-December 31
Connecticut private & shore	16"	5 fish	May 19-June 23; July 8-December 1
CT authorized for-hire monitoring program vessels		5 fish	May 19-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
New York	16.5"	3 fish	June 23-August 31
		6 fish	September 1-December 31
New Jersey	12.5"	10 fish	May 17-June 19
		1 fish	July 1-August 31
		10 fish	October 1-October 31
		15 fish	November 1-December 31
DE, MD, NC (north of Cape Hatteras)	13"	15	May 15-September 30; October 10-December 31
VA	13"	15	May 15-July 6; August 9-December 31

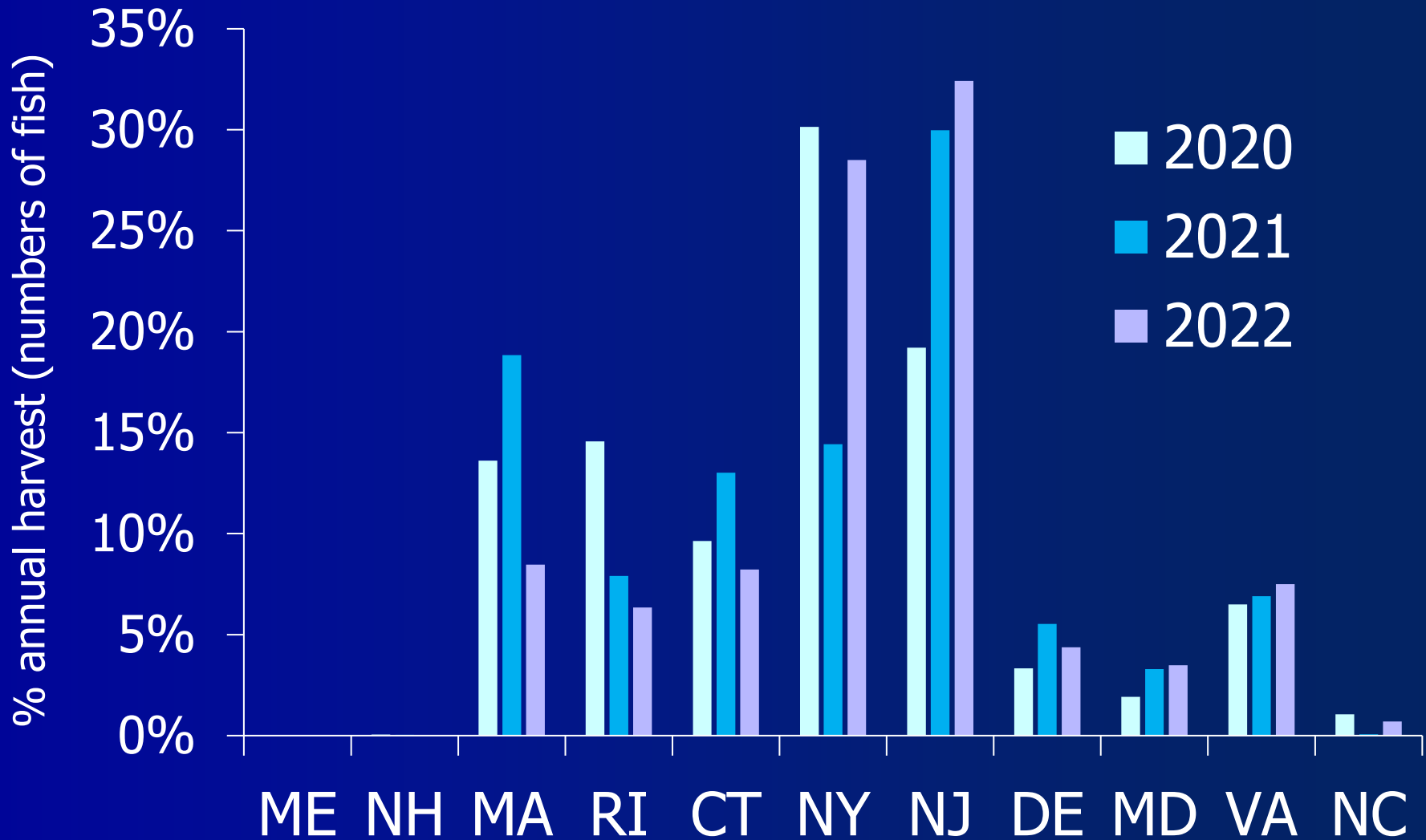


# Rec. Harvest Location

2013-2022 average in numbers of fish

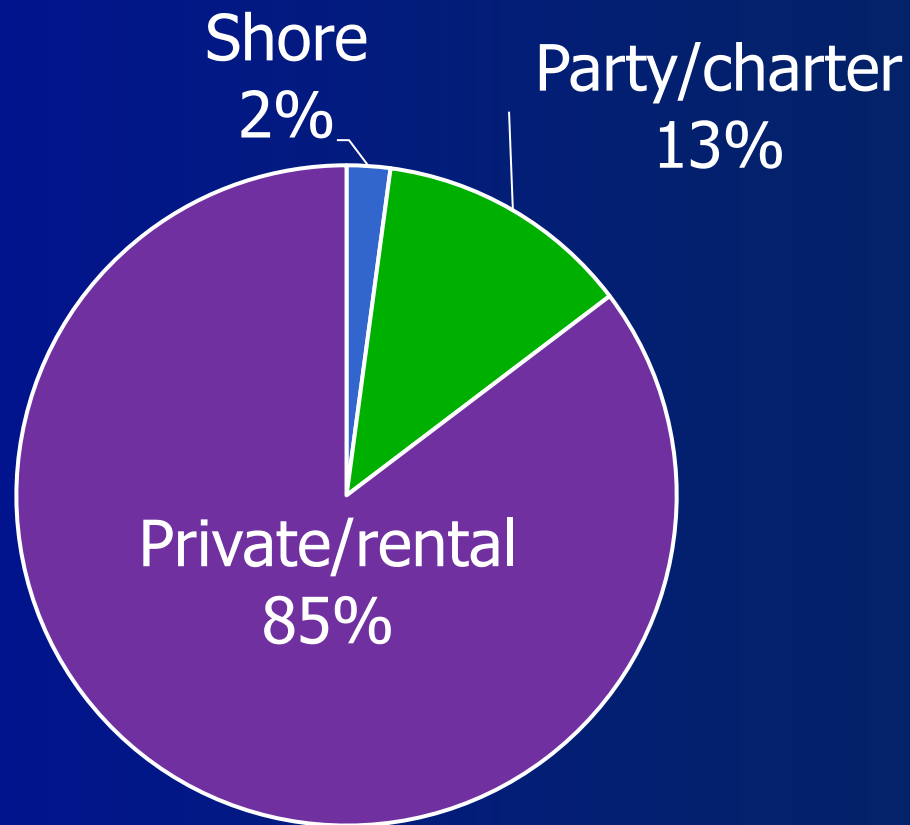


# Rec. Harvest by State



# Rec. Harvest by Mode

2013 – 2022 average in numbers of fish



# MAFMC Research Priorities

## BLACK SEA BASS

### SHORT-TERM/SMALLER SCALE

- 26. Evaluate the biological, management, and socioeconomic drivers of recreational harvest and discards.
- 27. Improve the precision of recreational and commercial discard estimates and estimate the uncertainty of recreational and commercial discards with emphasis on commercial pot trap and hook and line gear.
- 28. Continued evaluation of the appropriateness of the current model structure with two spatial sub-units.

### LONG-TERM/LARGER SCALE

- 29. Investigate movement rates and cues within the population, and spatial patterns in growth, recruitment, and mortality.
- 30. Investigate the impact of a changing environment due to climate change on the life history and spatial dynamics of the stock and fisheries.
- 31. Consider or investigate new or alternative methods that effectively sample in black sea bass habitats.

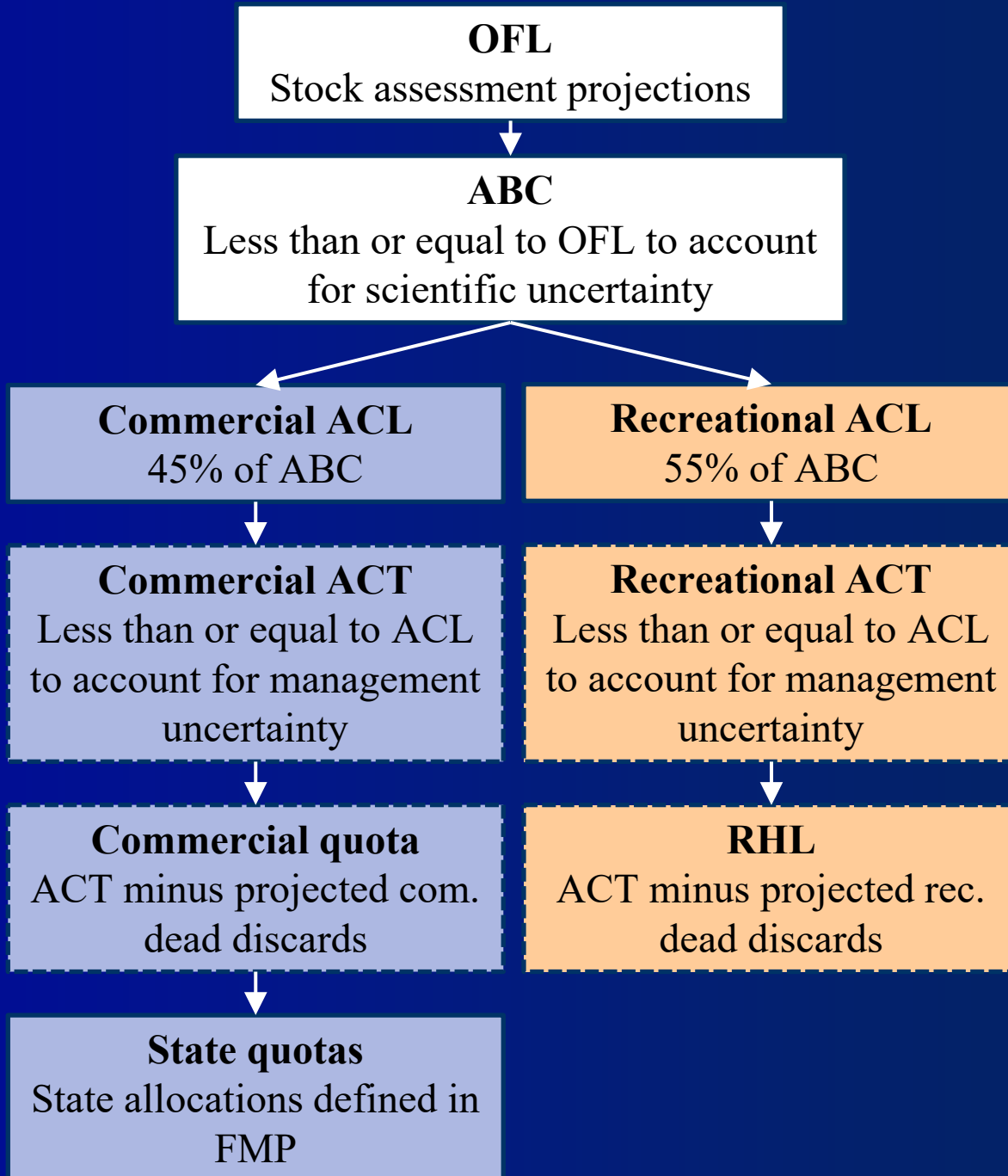
# Discussion Questions



- **What factors influenced recent catch and landings?**
  - Markets/economy?
  - Environment?
  - Fishery regulations?
  - Other factors?
  
- **What other issues or concerns do you want to highlight?**
  
- **What research recommendations do you have for black sea bass?**
  
- **What recommendations do you have for black sea bass regulations in 2024?**

# Backup slides

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# Commercial Non-Target Species

Species	% of total catch on black sea bass observed directed trips, 2017-2022 <sup>a</sup>
DOGFISH, SPINY	12%
SCUP	9%
SEA ROBIN, NORTHERN	6%
SEA ROBIN, STRIPED	3%
SEA ROBIN, NK	3%
SKATE, LITTLE/WINTER, NK	2%
FLOUNDER, SUMMER (FLUKE)	2%
SKATE, LITTLE	2%



# Recreational Non-Target Species

- Species guild analysis to identify species commonly caught together on recreational trips.
- Commonly caught with black sea bass:
  - Scup, sea robins, summer flounder, bluefish, tautog.

# MAFMC 2020-2024 Research Priorities

## GENERAL OR CROSS-SPECIES

### SHORT-TERM/SMALLER SCALE

1. Investigate stock structure utilizing otolith microchemistry and other genetic analyses for different Mid-Atlantic stocks (e.g., golden and blueline tilefish, black sea bass, Atlantic mackerel, and surfclam).
2. Understand the objectives and performance measures for the fishery from a biological and socioeconomic perspective, to evaluate the balance of costs and benefits of ABC specifications (e.g., variable vs. average ABC).
3. Explore the utilization of local ecological knowledge to help characterize and understand fisheries habitat change over time to help identify areas of greatest need of protection.
4. Create a framework to improve social science information regarding crew employment, remuneration and job satisfaction for all Mid-Atlantic fisheries.
5. Evaluate the potential impacts of offshore wind development, including the impacts from electromagnetic fields and noise, on habitats, and productivity, larval distribution, and changing community structure of Council-managed stocks.
6. Evaluate the impacts of offshore wind energy development on fisheries-independent surveys (e.g., implications for data collection efforts, survey design, and uncertainty).
7. Evaluate the relationship between changes in landings limits and the rates and magnitude of discarding in the commercial and recreational fisheries.
8. Evaluate the use of samples collected by the industry study fleet for all Mid-Atlantic stocks.

# MAFMC 2020-2024 Research Priorities

## LONG-TERM/LARGER SCALE

- 9.** Monitor changes in distribution and habitat use for all Mid-Atlantic species and evaluate implications for stock productivity.
- 10.** Collect accurate size and age composition of commercial and recreational catch (including the discarded component of the catch) to develop or improve catch at age matrices for all managed stocks.
- 11.** Incorporate ecosystem level data (predator/prey interactions, trophic dynamics, etc.) into single and multi-species assessment and management models.
- 12.** Investigate potential sector and regional allocation changes and adaptive management strategies to respond to changing environmental conditions.
- 13.** Develop tools to collect representative economic information on fixed and variable trip costs to understand fleet profitability for all Mid-Atlantic fisheries.
- 14.** Evaluate potential socioeconomic impacts of offshore wind energy development on Council-managed fisheries, including changes in fishing behavior, changes in the distribution of fishing effort, changes in revenues, and differential impacts on commercial and recreational fisheries.
- 15.** Implement novel supplemental surveys to derive fishery independent indices of abundance (black sea bass, blueline and golden tilefish, Atlantic mackerel).

# 2022 State Measures

Aiming to achieve 20.7% reduction in harvest compared to 2018-2021 average in all states.

State	Min. Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
Maine	13"	10 fish	May 19-Sept 21; Oct 18-Dec 31
New Hampshire	13"	10 fish	Jan-Dec 31
Massachusetts	16"	4 fish	May 21-Sept 4
Rhode Island private & shore	16"	2 fish	May 22-Aug 31
Rhode Island for-hire		3 fish	Sept 1-Dec 31
		2 fish	June 18-Aug 31
		6 fish	Sept 1-Dec 31
Connecticut private & shore	16"	5 fish	May 19-Dec 1
CT authorized for-hire monitoring program vessels		5 fish	May 19-Aug 31
		7 fish	Sept 1-Dec 31
New York	16"	3 fish	June 23-Aug 31
		6 fish	Sept 1-Dec 31
New Jersey	13"	10 fish	May 17-Jun 19
		2 fish	July 1-Aug 31
		10 fish	Oct 7-Oct 26
		15 fish	Nov 1-Dec 31
DE, MD, VA, NC (north of Cape Hatteras)	13"	15 fish	May 15-Dec 11

# State Measures, 2018-2021

State	Min. Size	Bag	Open Season
Maine	13"	10	May 19 - Sept 21; Oct 18 - Dec 31
New Hampshire	13"	10	Jan 1 - Dec 31
Massachusetts	15"	5	2018: May 19 - Sept 12
			2019 & 2020: May 18 - Sept 8
			2021: May 18 - Sept 8
Rhode Island	15"	3	Jun 24 - Aug 31
		7	Sept 1 - Dec 31
Connecticut private & shore	15"	5	May 19 - Dec 31
CT authorized party/charter monitoring program vessels	15"	5	May 19 - Aug 31
		7	Sept 1- Dec 31
New York	15"	3	Jun 23 - Aug 31
		7	Sept 1- Dec 31
New Jersey	12.5"	10	May 15 - Jun 22
		2	Jul 1- Aug 31
		10	Oct 8 - Oct 31
	13"	15	Nov 1 - Dec 31
Delaware	12.5"	15	May 15 - Dec 31
Maryland	12.5"	15	May 15 - Dec 31
Virginia	12.5"	15	2018: Feb 1 - 28; May 15 - Dec 31
			2019: Feb 1-28; May 15-31; June 22-Dec 31
			2020: Feb 1 - 29; May 29 - Dec 31
			2021: Feb 1-28; May 15-May 31; Jun 16-Dec 31
North Carolina, North of Cape Hatteras (35° 15'N)	12.5	15	2018: Feb 1 - 28; May 15 - Dec 31
			2019: Feb 1 - 28; May 17 - Dec 31
			2020: Feb 1 - 29; May 17 - Nov 30
			2021: May 15 - Dec 31

# Federal Rec. Measures, 2018-2021

Bag  
limit

15 fish

Size  
limit

12.5 inches total length

Season

2/1 – 2/28; 5/15 – 12/-31

Federal waters measures waived for the first time in 2022 using conservation equivalency process, similar to summer flounder.